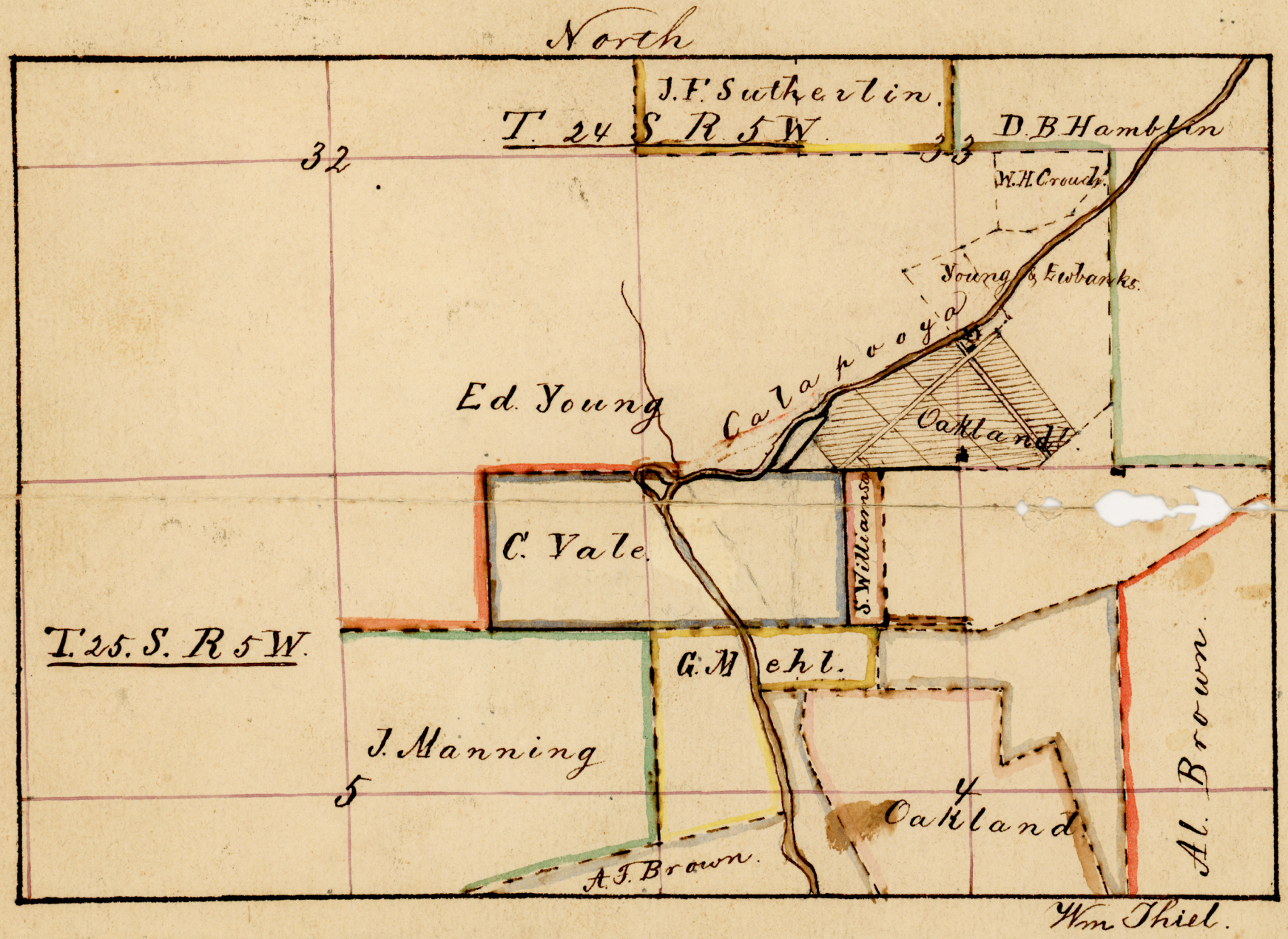
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T. 24 S R 5 W.
D.B. Hamblin
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33
W.H. Crouch
Young & Ewbanks
Calapooya
Ed. Young
Oakland
C. Vale.
S. Williams
T. 25. S. R 5 W.
G. Mehl.
J. Manning
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Oakland
Al. Brown
A.F. Brown.
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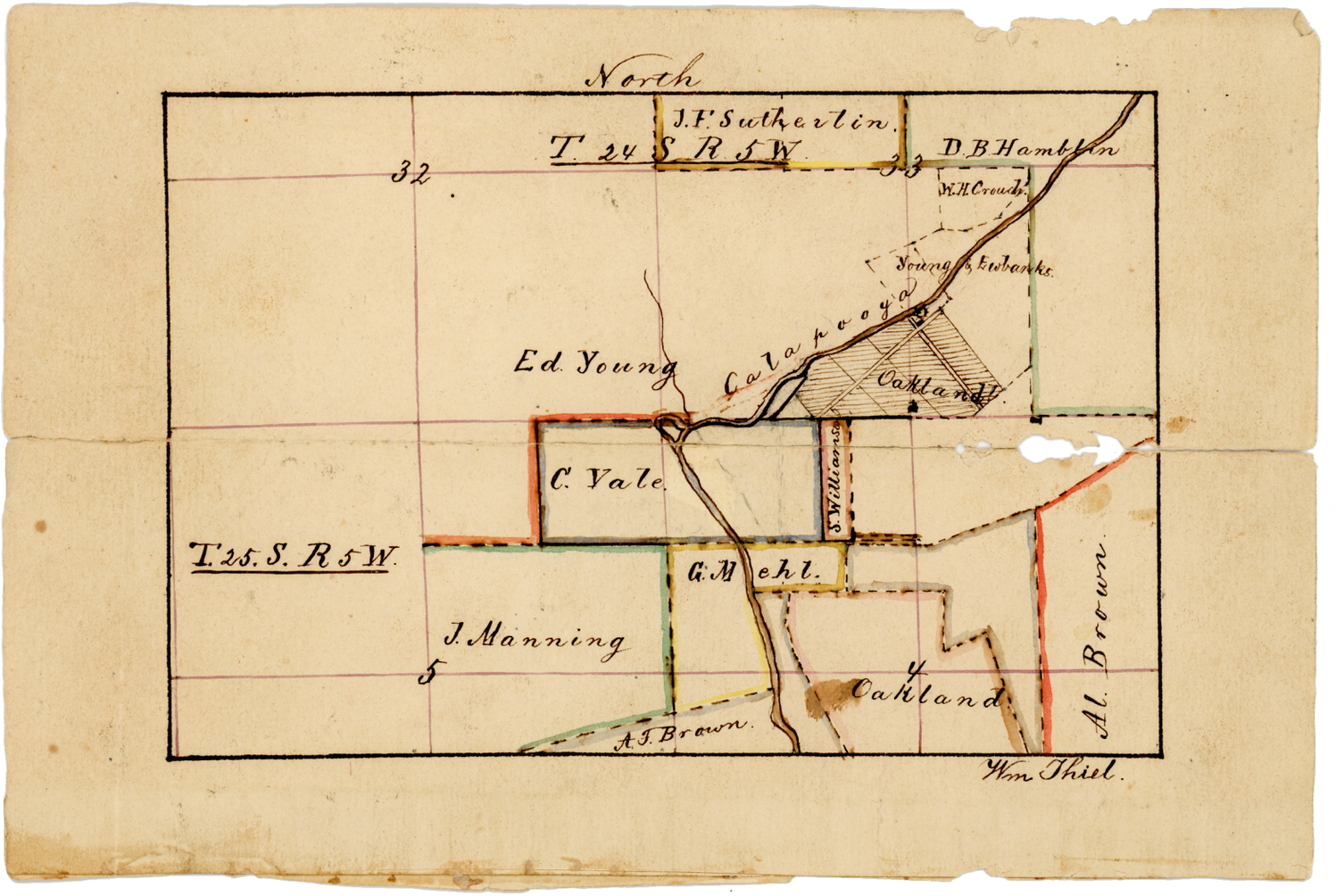
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Land Claim Map Oakland Oregon c 1850s

A working document

Reflections

Jeffrey Hunt

January 13 2026

This plat-style land-claim drawing was found folded inside an oversize leather wallet from the old family steel box — the box of papers and photos that my grandfather, Thurman Dear, took with him when he moved out of the Oakland homestead in the late 1920s. The wallet very likely belonged to my great-grandfather, Allen Jenkins Dear.

The drawing appears to relate to early settlement land claims in the Oakland, Oregon area (Douglas County), with names that match key figures in my family's pioneer network — including Charles Vail and Edward (Ed) Young — along with neighboring claimholders. At first glance, it reads like a straightforward local plat or claim map, but further review suggests it may be something more unusual and revealing.

After sharing the map with my cousin Wally Dunsmoor, who has done extensive and careful work mapping and comparing Donation Land Claims (DLCs) around Oakland, it became clear that this drawing does not behave like a final or official property layout. Several elements appear inconsistent with known geographical and claim relationships — for example, the placement of certain properties relative to Oakland and the Calapooya Creek, and the way township sections are lettered compared to standard Public Land Survey conventions. Rather than indicating a "bad map," these inconsistencies point to a different explanation: this may have been a working proposal, not a finalized record.

Wally's interpretation is that the map likely represents an early attempt to divide or allocate portions of the Baker Donation Land Claim into farm parcels for related families (Young / Vail / Eubanks) before the final staking and later land transactions were settled. The inclusion of a plat labeled "Young & Eubanks" may reflect the period when that household was forming and land disposition was still being negotiated. This would place the drawing plausibly in the mid-to-late 1850s, near the period of major family events and purchases connected to the Baker claim. In other words, the map may capture a transitional moment — when the future shape of farms, town lots, and family holdings was still being worked out.

A second land-claim map appears to have been preserved with this one in the same leather wallet, and may be related. Both maps are presented here as part of the Dear Hunt Archive. The interpretive framework summarized above is drawn from Wally Dunsmoor's excellent research and comparison work.